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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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A-ONE #0224

06/16/00

~ People Are Talking! ~ New N64 & Pikachu Too! ~ New, Free MP3
~ 100 Million Game Boys! ~ Electronic Signatures ~ Woz in the Hall!
~ Lara Croft Does Mac! ~ New Windows For Palms! ~ WebTV Competition!
~ MS: No Supreme Court! ~ New Towers & Towers II ~ X-Box Goes Web!

-* Microsoft Files For Appeal *-
-* House Committee OKs Anti-spam Bill! *-
-* Gates' Arrogance Microsoft's Achilles Heel *-

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->From the Editor's Keyboard

"Saying it like it is!"

Well, they say we're supposed to see Summer make another appearance this weekend; I certainly hope so! This cooler weather in June just doesn't cut it for me. Officially, Summer starts in less than a week, but what happened to Spring? This is the second year in a row that it seemed to pass us by here!

I've seen a number of articles during the Microsoft antitrust case that made reference to the points that Microsoft, and specifically Bill Gates, shot themselves and their case in the proverbial foot by behaving in a manner which many would call arrogance. Having followed the case fairly extensively here in A-ONE, I'd have to agree with that perception. I've included one of those commentary articles in this week's issue for your perusal.

Otherwise, I don't have a lot to say this week. I guess even editors start to slow down, like the news, during the summer months. I hope that this doesn't remain a pattern.

Until next time...

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Another week has come and gone, and the weather has thrown us another curveball here in the northeast. I'm starting to wonder if this isn't some aspect of global warming or El Nino or the depleted ozone layer or any of the other causes that people like to throw around these days.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that any of these concerns are unfounded or anything of the sort. It's just that we don't know enough about what we've been doing to the world for the past hundred or so years to have even a fair guess about what the consequences might be.

What gets me annoyed is this "save the planet" mentality that people throw around. I'm not saying that we shouldn't conserve, or that we shouldn't recycle. It's the "we are the planet" tone.

The plain and simple fact is that, even with the massive nuclear arsenals around the world, there is nothing we can do to actually destroy the planet. The planet will continue no matter what we do. It just might not be able to support US anymore. Instead of "save the planet" the thought should be "save the self-involved, short-sighted,

self-destructive meat sacks that need to rely on the planet".

I don't claim to be able to see the future, or to have any scientific insight into what the future holds for us, but I DO know that the planet Earth will continue no matter what we do. Kind of a humbling thought, ain't it?

So what does this have to do with Atari computers? Nothing really, I just find it amusing that the computer world is now in just about the same position. Microsoft and Apple still worry about "saving" the future of computing. Whether Microsoft stays as one company, splits into two, or pulls up its roots and ends up selling barnacle glue in downtown Northeast Southwestern, computers and computing will go on. Let's work on saving ourselves, shall we?

Okay, enough with the sermons. Let's get on with the news from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

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Matthew Simpson-Morgan asks for info on SpeedoGDOS:

"I was wondering if SpeedoGDOS is something that is available on the net for download? I've done some searching including ftp sites and have found nothing. I'd appreciate any info anyone has."

Chris Simon tells Matthew:

"As far as I'm aware, SpeedoGDOS is a commercial program. It was when I bought it anyway! But NVDI is a better product."

Martin Ziesch asks about using a Laserjet with his favorite word processor:

"I just got a HP Laserjet 4P and want to have it work with 1St Word 3.2. Does anyone have an appropriate printer driver HP.CFG or a Hex-File HP.HEX?"

Peter West tells Martin:

"There were hp_djet.cfg and hp_laser.cfg files on the V3.20 maintenance release. I can send these to you - they are quite small. I have also made a more extended hp_dj520.cfg (and .hex) with some extra features, which will probably work on your 4P - or at least serve as a template to make your own adaptation."

Edward Baiz posts this about one of the newer document processors:

"I just received my copy (of Papyrus 8) in the mail and I must say that I am impressed. All new features plus a more professional looks makes this piece of software an excellent choice for word-processing. I know there will be some that disagree with me, but that's life...."

Martin Holmes asks about ftp access:

"I'm having problems getting through to ftp.chapelle.rma.ac.be Didn't have any bother before and other ftp addresses seem to work ok Newsie just reports 'No Connection'. Does anyone know what's changed?"

Chris Crosskey tells Martin:

"It's been pretty slow recently, I haven't been able to get to it from home recently, and trying from work on an empty 4Mb/s feed off the Oxford University backbone gave me an average download speed of about 60cps....I had to leave it running all day nearly just to get Falcamp..."

Ronald van der Kamp adds:

"I have found out that from Holland (nextdoor to Belgium) the connection sometimes is OK with 3k/4.5k b/s download but sometimes from the start of the connection I only get 300 cps and that stays. When I try immediately the connection (tel) through another provider also 300 cps.

But then I wait for half an hour and ... back to normal 4,5 kb/s
Seems that the server is very busy sometimes and allow you not more bandwidth than 300 cps, something he does not seem to upgrade your connection once the bout of activity has diminished. Or am fantasizing now?"

John Garone adds:

"Just downloaded infomat.zip (about 82k in 20 seconds). It was a bit erratic and the initial connection was a bit slow (around 10 seconds). This was at 56k on a Falcon at around 6pm EST. Have you tried in the wee hours of the morning?"

Jeff Charette asks for help with his Atari laser printer:

"I have a fair bit of Atari hardware/ software in my basement including a laser printer which I don't use anymore. We run an atari Mega4 at work for job tracking and invoicing and I would like to hook up the laser to it. Unfortunately, I could never get Superbase to print out to the laser. Does anyone know what software is required to accomplish this or is there a way to hook up an Atari laser to a pc?"

Peter Schneider tells Jeff:

"No, there is no way to use the Atari laser printer on a PC."

Derryck Croker adds:

".....unless you link the PC to an Atari with a null modem cable, and use magicslm from my web page on the Atari. Or print to disk on the PC and use the utility to print from that disk.

If Superbase has a driver for Epson printers you might be able to use the Laserbrain Epson emulator to drive your Atari laser. Drawback is that it's only a 9 pin emulation IIRC. That emulator should be available from the usual Atari ftp sites.

>to hook up an Atari laser to a pc? Failing both, I have a perfectly good

This is possible, you'll need to keep the Mega as a server for the laser printer tho'. You'll find the program you need on my web site, follow the "Translated apps" link (although it's actually still in German)."

Chris Simon posts this about using Papyrus and his favorite

screen/graphics accelerators:

"I've recently taken delivery of Cortex's Eclipse card (with its driver software fVDI) and Papyrus Office. However I've had a frustrating week trying to get them to work with NVDI.

I'd like to know if anyone else is using the same combination and has encountered the same problems, or maybe it's just me and my setup. I've tried tweaking all the options in each piece of software but there are millions of combinations and I haven't managed to find anything that works. I'd be grateful for any comments before I send this mail to the relevant parties.

If you want to run fVDI and NVDI together (because you want to use vector fonts or the NVDI printer drivers), the NVDI screen drivers named NVDI*.SYS have to be deleted or renamed. This probably causes some of the following problems.

- 1) Both CAB and Papyrus Office display vector fonts much smaller than they should be. With Papyrus in particular, printed output is then all wrong, as presumably Papyrus formats lines according to the display (as it's WYSIWYG). I suspect it's getting zero from NVDI as the font width. When printed, the lines are infinite in length and get truncated on the right. To fix this, the Compatibility option for Display in Papyrus has to be changed from "Default" or "Inquire from Screen Driver" to "93DPI fixed". Although text is then readable on screen, I think this is still slightly smaller than what they should be. Lines are still truncated on the right when printed, although only by a few characters this time. An existing document created in Papyrus Gold and NOT reformatted in Office displays lines shorter than they should be on screen but they print OK. When the document is reformatted in Office, the lines fill the whole page width on screen but get truncated again when printed. Also, a right-flushed section on a page (for example, an address at the top of a letter) doesn't align properly and the right margin is slightly ragged.
- 2) In colour planes greater than 8-bit (i.e. > 256 colours), the desktop colours are wrong; the system appears "jerky" sometimes; a repaint after a dialog box disappears sometimes takes a long time; CAB displays some GIFs with the wrong background, possibly those with a transparent colour other than the background colour although I haven't been able to prove or disprove that. Try my home page for an example! The Welsh flag in the top left corner displays wrongly, so does the Zetnet logo at the bottom of the page.
- 3) When fVDI is set to use colour planes greater than 16 (although it's difficult to find the right combination - the card should be able to handle 800x600x[32/24]@80 but it doesn't and reduces the colours to 8-bit) the icons on the desktop disappear.
- 4) Closing dialog boxes and windows very often doesn't repaint the background properly and leaves it unreadable.
- 5) The bottom 10 lines or so of a screen (I'm using 800x600) never repaint properly. For example, maximising (sorry, Windoze terminology) a window and then reducing it again leaves part of

the window at the bottom of the screen.

Further information - I've just tried disabling NVDI and installing SpeedoGDOS instead. Papyrus Office then works fine. However:

- 1) I get Monaco fonts instead of the system fonts!
- 2) I cannot use Truetype fonts.
- 3) CAB doesn't seem happy with NVDI not being there - it doesn't display any SpeedoGDOS fonts, although it lists them in the dialog, and it positions some images *outside* the window not on the web page.
- 4) There is no printer driver for my colour Canon BJC-4650."

Johan Klockars, the author of fVDI, tells Chris:

"As was mentioned in another message, [the small font size] is (most likely) because fVDI currently sets a fixed size for the screen pixels. I'll fix that shortly.

Hmm. I run in 16 bit mode almost all the time and the colours are definitely right here. Try running RECOLOUR.PRG and see if that helps. You could also try the 'nopalette' option and see if that changes anything (it really shouldn't).

What do you mean by 'jerky'?

You should be glad that not all dialog repaints are slow. ;-)

The default settings for fVDI should normally be to cache blits that seem to be background saves (such as for menu drop downs and dialogs) in the RAM on the RageII itself. This is much quicker than actually doing the blit to the Falcon RAM (which is what all other VDIs have always done).

The AES background buffer caching, which should always be safe to use, is not effective for some programs, however, which do their own buffering. In that case, 'screencache' will often do the job, but it can cause redraw problems with some programs.

If the above does not seem to fit in your case, please let me know of a program where I can duplicate what you're talking about. Even without the caching, it should't really feel like it's taking a 'long' time (unless you're running without 'pcibios' and 'doblit' does the redraw a pixel at a time...).

There is currently no 24 bit support whatsoever in fVDI/RageII.

The frequencies available in 800x600x32 are (currently):

56, 60, 70, 72, 75, 85, 90, 100, 120

If your selection doesn't fit any of the above, fVDI will select something that is 'similar' but 'lower'. That is, it won't select the 85, which could potentially be harmful to your monitor.
(There is no 80 Hz mode available at any colour depth.)

AFAICR, in this case 800x600x32@75 should have been selected, but there might be something wrong with the 'fallback' algorithm (or I might have

constructed it to drop down in colour depth before frequency, although that doesn't seem like all that good an idea).
I'll check it out.

Unfortunately, the original desktop can't deal with 32 bit icons (it handles them with the same code as the 8 bit ones, rather than with the 16 bit code, which would have worked better).

You can get the icons displayed by activating 'onlysrc', which will make all blits use the D=S method and thus disable the masking the desktop tries to do. Of course, this will affect other programs to.

>4) Closing dialog boxes and windows very often doesn't repaint the
> background properly and leaves it unreadable.

Hmm. I've only seen that [not redrawing properly after closing a dialog box] with the 'print/show/abort' dialog, which is difficult to debug since the desktop code is in the ROM. If you've seen this happen in some ordinary program, please let me know which one. I'd also be interested in ways to expose the problem without using the above dialog.

Anyway, these kinds of problems should go away if you turn off the AES background buffer caching (don't start the ACC), but that isn't really recommended since it slows things down so much.

I've never seen that [the bottom lines not redrawing] (but then I'm using 1024x768 or 1152x864 most of the time). I'll check it out.

I take it you mean this happens with all programs, including the desktop?"

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - 100 Million Game Boys Shipped!
***** JV Games Expands Towers, Towers II!
Lara Croft Does Macintosh! New N64!
X-Box Goes Web! And much more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Nintendo to Launch "Pikachu" Version of Nintendo64

Nintendo Co Ltd , the world's second-largest maker of video game players, said on Tuesday it will launch a new version of its Nintendo64 console which will feature the popular Pokemon character ''Pikachu".

The move, aimed at reviving flagging sales of the console, comes after rival Sony Corp said last week it will start selling a portable version of its original 32-bit PlayStation from next month.

The new Nintendo64 version, which does not feature any technical advancement, is not expected to narrow the gap in sales between it and Sony's video game players, the industry leader.

Nintendo's new product will hit Japanese stores on July 21 at 14,000 yen (\$131.27), the same price as the existing model, and will be available in the United States and Europe by the end of the year.

It will feature Pikachu -- one of the most popular of the company's Pokemon game characters -- on the front of the 64-bit consoles. Pikachu's cheek will light up when the machine is switched on.

Nintendo hopes the new version, released to coincide with school summer holidays, will boost sales of Nintendo64, which first went on sale in June 1996. Some 29.57 million units had been sold globally by March.

That lags the 70 million PlayStation home video game players sold over the past five years by industry leader Sony, which plans to start selling a portable version of its 32-bit PlayStation player on July 7.

Sony also began selling the 128-bit PlayStation2 console in Japan in March, shipping two million units in the first 82 days.

Nintendo has been forced to postpone the introduction of its own 128-bit player capable of providing more life-life animation. Nintendo, which originally intended to begin selling the next-generation game player worldwide later this year, now is expected to not introduce the product until next year -- and initially only in Japan.

The failure of one-time industry leader Nintendo to remain at the forefront of technological evolution in the game player industry has caused the Kyoto-based company's sales and profit to drop. In the past year to March 31, its net profit declined 35 percent to 56 billion yen, as sales dwindled 7.4 percent to 531 billion yen.

Nintendo's shares were not helped by the company's announcement on Tuesday. Its shares closed down 140 yen or 0.8 percent at 17,830.

Industry First -- Nintendo Ships 100,000,000th Game Boy

Pokemon, Color Display Push Current Sales to All Time High

Going where no video game machine has ever gone before, shipments of Nintendo's portable Game Boy surpassed 100,000,000 on June 16.

Since its launch in 1989, Game Boy worldwide has sold continuously at an average rate of more than 1,000 systems per hour for 11 years to reach the 100 million number.

The world's favorite video game system not only demonstrates unprecedented market stamina, but is also currently enjoying record popularity -- Game Boy enjoys a 95 percent-plus share of the world portable video game market. And thanks to the universal appeal of the Pokemon series of video games and introduction of a full-color display with Game Boy Color, Nintendo reported record sales of 17.5 million units in the fiscal year ending March 31.

"In a business sense, Game Boy has succeeded beyond anyone's expectations by delivering a unique form of entertainment combining portability, a simple design, over a thousand game choices, and wide appeal to players of all ages and both genders, says Minoru Arakawa, president, Nintendo of America Inc. "But in a broader sense, Game Boy has succeeded socially by inventing and defining its own small part of international culture.

Over its lifetime, the original Game Boy has shrunk in size, been retooled in various color housings, and eventually moved to color display in 1998 with Game Boy Color. But the biggest improvement ever will occur with the debut of Game Boy Advance at the end of the year in Japan, and early next year in the United States. Game Boy Advance will replace the current 8-bit processor with a 32-bit RISC CPU, offering players more than 500 colors on screen simultaneously, incredible audio, and brand new forms of game play, as well as the ability to play all existing Game Boy titles.

The black and white and color Game Boy games have also seen their share of popularity. As a 'pack-in' game with most of the Game Boy hardware systems sold until the mid '90s, Tetris is the most widely played video game of all time, with tens of millions of users. As individually purchased software, Game Boy games starring Nintendo icon Mario, the plumber, have sold nearly 36 million units, and the current Pokemon craze is even bigger, having already generated sales of more than 48 million Game Boy games worldwide.

The Truth About Game Boy

- *100 million Game Boys stacked end-to-end would cover both borders and the entire shoreline of the continental United States;
- *100 million Game Boys stacked on top of each other would stand as tall as 287 Mount Everests;
- *If you played each one of those 100 million Game Boys for just 60 seconds without stopping, it would take 190 years;
- *A full 35 percent of all Game Boy players are women, and more than one in four is over the age of 18;
- *Game Boy devotees have spanned the political spectrum from President George Bush to First Lady Hillary Clinton, from Olympic athletes awaiting event competition to hundreds of entertainers, including the Backstreet Boys.

GameSpy Industries to Launch New Website - 'PlanetXbox.com' - Devoted To Information About Microsoft's Upcoming 'Xbox' Video Game Console

GameSpy Industries, Inc., a pioneer in interactive online entertainment with a network of websites specifically catering to the gaming community, as well as a leading software developer, has developed a new website called "PlanetXbox.com," which will launch on June 13th. The new site has been designed to supply information and updates to video-game console fans and devotees who are interested in learning more about Microsoft's upcoming

(2001) video-game console release, "Xbox." The announcement was made Monday by Mark Surfus, CEO/Founder, GameSpy Industries.

PlanetXbox.com will become the third GameSpy website to specifically focus on video-game consoles. The previously existing "sister" sites to the new site are PlanetDreamcast.com (info on Sega's "Dreamcast" console,) and PlanetPS2.com (info on Sony's "PlayStation 2" console.) PlanetXbox.com will provide a good deal of information on the new Xbox system itself, as well as on the games that have been announced in conjunction with Microsoft's upcoming pure console system.

Regarding the announcement, Mr. Surfus said, "PlanetXbox.com is the latest in a series of 'Planet' sites created and launched by GameSpy. These Planet sites are extremely targeted, information-dense sites designed for fans of specific games or of genres of games. For example, fans of the game 'Quake' can find literally everything they would ever need to know at PlanetQuake.com. Our Planet sites also serve as the cornerstone for large communities of fans, who all wish to share their interests and common experiences."

The Xbox has been described as an upcoming "future generation" game device from Microsoft, which will function in much the same way as Sony's PlayStation 2 and Sega's Dreamcast systems. The Xbox will be a video-game console that allows gamers to play games on their television sets. The Xbox is slated to feature an 8-gigabyte hard drive, 64 MB of RAM, a 4x DVD player, broadband capabilities, and HDTV support. The new device is scheduled to be released in Fall 2001, and will be competitively priced with other game consoles.

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation Released for the Macintosh

Aspyr Media Inc., in a continuing partnership with Eidos Interactive Inc., ships Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation for the Macintosh, with the conversion performed by Westlake Interactive.

The Last Revelation is the latest in the award-winning Tomb Raider series starring Lara Croft. It is the most compelling technically and graphically advanced adventure, with a completely new interface and great new features. The Last Revelation, for the Mac, will surely impress all new and old Lara Croft fans.

In The Last Revelation, Lara Croft heads to the ancient ruins in Egypt where she unwittingly releases the evil god, Set. In a race against time, Lara must use her wit and skill to reimprison Set and save the world from Armageddon. Enemies, old and new, lurk at every turn as Lara must overcome ingenious puzzles, the most infernal traps ever devised and evil from beyond the grave. With a vastly improved AI, players will experience heart-stopping action in their quest to guide Lara through her greatest adventure yet.

"Game play is spectacular and the visuals are beautiful, The Last Revelation is brilliant," says Ted Staloch, VP of Sales at Aspyr Media.

Players use amazing new moves, including the shoulder barge and the hand-over-hand shimmey around corners to get through the dazzling Egyptian terrain. The new single skin technology really brings Lara to life and it wouldn't be a Tomb Raider adventure without all the great toys, including a

jeep and motorbike with sidecar.

''The Last Revelation, for the Mac, will surely impress any Tomb Raider fan," says Chip Blundell, Senior Product Manager at Eidos Interactive.

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation, for Macintosh, will be available wherever Mac games are sold, with a Suggested Retail Price of \$39.95.

The Legend of Dragoon Brings the Ultimate Epic Role-Playing Adventure To the PlayStation

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. announced Tuesday the nationwide release of The Legend of Dragoon, exclusively for the PlayStation game console. After three years in the making with a development team of more than 100 members, this enormous new fantasy world unfolds as one of the biggest, most unforgettable epic role-playing adventures ever.

Spanning four CDs, The Legend of Dragoon takes players on an unbelievable adventure full of astounding animations and graphics, innovative game design and a strong character-driven story that portrays a world of lush beauty, intense magical combat and unknown destinies. Featuring more than 40 minutes of cinematic graphics, more than 650 beautifully pre-rendered backgrounds utilizing the latest graphics technologies and providing more than 80 hours of immersive gameplay, The Legend of Dragoon completely maximizes and showcases the power of the PlayStation game console.

''The Legend of Dragoon is one of the most magnificent and extraordinary role-playing adventure games to be released for the PlayStation game console," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ''With its stunning cinematic graphics and deeply, involving gameplay, The Legend of Dragoon will captivate both hardcore and novice gamers alike."

The legend begins with all living things being born from the ''Divine Tree," with Dragons, Humans and the Winged Ones (Winglies) being among them. The Humans won their freedom from the Winglies when they learned to harness the spiritual forces of the Dragons, transforming themselves into Dragoons. For 10,000 years thereafter, there is tranquil co-existence among all races ... until now. Beneath the tranquility, lurks a mysterious prophecy -- the emergence of a new race. Worshipped, yet feared, no one knows what its presence will bring. Eternal peace and happiness for all? Or the darkest evil imaginable? And so the story begins.

The Legend of Dragoon follows the adventures of Dart, a young hero who sets out on a journey to find the ''Black Demon" to avenge the death of his parents. Along the way, he must rescue his childhood friend, Shana, and interact and fight with different races, all while harnessing the powers of the Dragoon.

Key features in The Legend of Dragoon include:

- * Innovative and unique, real-time tactical combat system known as the ''Additionals" system, which allows players to strike consecutive attacks together in one sequence
- * Transform into Dragoons and experience a new level of depth and complexity in gameplay
- * Nine playable characters, each with their own specialty,

- ''Additionals" skills and Dragoon magic
- * More than 40 minutes of incredible, stunning CG graphics to enhance gameplay experience
- * Intense storyline that unfolds through more than 80 hours of immersive gameplay
- * Dazzling magical powers and special effects
- * More than 200 items to acquire and utilize
- * More than 650 beautifully pre-rendered backgrounds maximizing the latest graphic technologies
- * Completely interactive adventure elements

The independent Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rates The Legend of Dragoon ''T" for ''Teen." For more information about the ESRB visit www.esrb.org.

The Nightmare Has Landed - Konami's Highly Anticipated 'Nightmare Creatures II' Screams Onto Retail Shelves

Leading interactive entertainment giant, Konami, announced Tuesday that Nightmare Creatures II for the Sega Dreamcast is now available at retail outlets nationwide. With a SRP of \$44.99, this sequel to the 1.5 million unit selling Nightmare Creatures, developed by France-based Kalisto Entertainment, will immerse players in a gothic world of intense horror action set in 1934 Europe.

A full century after the conclusion of the original story, players of Nightmare Creatures II assume the role of Herbert Wallace, and pursue the evil and mystic Dr. Adam Crowley through the macabre underbelly of old London on a mission of vengeance. Crowley has grown in power since his defeat 100 years past and, unless defeated by Wallace, will extend his dark dominion across the world. Richly detailed 3D graphics, improved gameplay mechanics, cinematic cut-scenes and a sound track from rock star Rob Zombie will completely immerse players in the horrific and gory adventure.

''Kalisto has done an excellent job of maintaining the elements of the first game that made it so popular and groundbreaking, while improving gameplay, combat mechanics and graphics in Nightmare Creatures II," said Rick Naylor, Konami's Brand Manager for action/adventure titles. ''Fans of intense horror action should brace themselves for a thrill-ride."

Rated ''M" for mature audiences, the horror action gameplay is fast paced and intense, as players are opposed by Crowley's inhuman minions, including zombies, hideous laboratory monsters and savage, oversize bats, at every turn. As Wallace, players will combat opponents with a variety of new fighting techniques, special moves, weapons and lethal magic spells. In addition, players will have tremendous interaction with the game's surroundings as they direct Wallace to fight, run, climb, cling, swim, pick up objects and act on environmental items such as doors, crates and furniture.

Players will have extensive freedom to explore the large, open levels of Nightmare Creatures II. Thirty game sectors span across eight different worlds, including the cities of London and Paris, subways, alleyways, castles and underwater regions, among others. The lush environments are brought to life with a smooth, hi-resolution 3D engine and colored Gouraud shading on Wallace, monsters and objects. In addition, new and faster

camera angles create a smoother display and increased ability to focus on critical details.

Nightmare Creatures II shipped for the Sony PlayStation game console in May and is available on retail shelves for a SRP of \$39.99.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!

Towers II for Jaguar Might Be a Collector's Item!

Vince Valenti <vince9@earthlink.net>

JV Games, Inc. - June 8th, 2000 - It has been several years since Towers & Towers II made an appearance on the Atari ST / Atari Falcon030 / Jaguar. Now Towers: Lord Baniff's Deceit, will show its face again June 13th, 2000 for the Game Boy Color. Towers II: Plight of the Stargazer, will appear afterwards. Both games support one or two (with a link cable) players and is in Step 3D graphics, like Towers was on the Atari ST.

Towers II: Plight of the Stargazer has been a difficult item to purchase for the Jaguar. Telegames has very few copies, and not very many people are willing to part with it. We have seen prices as high as \$79.95 on the net for a new Towers II Cart! If any of you are gripping Towers II for the Jaguar, you might want to hold on to it. When these products get released for the GBC, it will only increase the value and rarity of Towers II for the Jaguar. :) We never had a collector's Item before!

www.jvgames.com

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Experts Cite Microsoft's Attitude

One of the most enduring images from Microsoft Corp.'s antitrust trial is that of Chairman Bill Gates, in his videotaped depositions, stating he does not know what a "browser" is.

"He was very contentious, combative, very dismissive of the government," said Stephen Houck, the one-time head of the states' antitrust prosecution

who helped depose Gates in August 1998. "I have deposed a number of senior executives in American companies, and I never saw anything like that."

Apparently, neither had U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson, who said in a memorandum accompanying his order to break up the software giant that "Microsoft has proven untrustworthy in the past."

But was it Microsoft's aggressive defense - some have called it arrogance - that led to the judge's ruling Wednesday? Those close to the case say it has less to do with an attitude and more to do with fervent belief in the company and its founder.

Jackson was making reference to a hearing in January 1998, when he angrily called Microsoft on the carpet for its interpretation of a previous order. Jackson had ordered Microsoft to remove its Internet Browser from the Windows operating system. Microsoft complied, but did so in a way that crippled the operating system entirely.

Microsoft said that was the only possible result of the judge's order, a move criticized in the media as self-serving and overly stubborn.

"They live in their own world over there, where they are just morally convinced of their own view of the market," said Rich Gray, an antitrust expert with Outside General Counsel Silicon Valley. "I hate using this phrase, but they were drinking their own Kool-Aid."

Indeed, the company has not accepted any blame in the case, other than a failure to communicate its side of the case well.

"Perhaps I should have taken the opportunity to go (to court) and talk about this in person," Gates said hours after Wednesday's ruling.

That might have minimized the damage Gates' videotaped depositions created when the Justice Department used them to great effect in the early days of the trial. A slouched-over Gates, fidgeting and mumbling noncommittal answers, was portrayed as evasive by the DOJ's special trial counsel David Boies.

"Boies was great, but it struck me that Gates had to be the worst-prepared witness for a deposition I'd ever seen," Gray said.

Rick Rule, former DOJ antitrust chief and now a Microsoft consultant, said the company was simply sandbagged by the Justice Department. Microsoft thought the depositions wouldn't be aired in court and didn't think that Boies' dramatic "soap-opera" tactic would have as much sway with the judge as it did.

"What you saw in that deposition wasn't uncommon," Rule said. "It's not a question of credibility. It's a question of a witness trying to get through some very vague, combative questions by a very skilled attorney."

At trial, Microsoft stumbled with witnesses who strained under government cross-examination and a river of questionable e-mails paraded before the judge. There was also the issue of a Microsoft videotape, which purported to show the true startup sequence of the Windows operating system, but which turned out to have been heavily edited.

"I don't think they were unusually combative, nor did they disrespect the court," Houck said. "The problem was that they were true believers. They

fought every little thing so hard that when it came time to fight the major battles, their credibility was hurt. A lot of that came from the very top."

Gates, a hands-on executive by any standard, was said to have taken an active role in the case. The chairman, whose father is an attorney, said he had spent hundreds of hours consulting with the legal team and in settlement talks. And although the Washington, D.C., law firm Sullivan & Cromwell was retained to help with the federal antitrust suit and previous government cases, Microsoft's own corporate counsel, William Neukom, headed the legal team in the case.

"There's this mindset that they just don't see the power that they wield in the market, and nobody there pointed it out to them," Gray said.

"They don't have anyone there to stand up and say the emperor has no clothes."

Rule, however, said the Microsoft legal team may have realized early on that Jackson wasn't favoring them, and focused on getting as much information into the court record to use as ammunition for the inevitable appeal.

"It's really too early to rate Microsoft's performance in this case," Rule said. "It's not over yet."

Microsoft Files Notice to Appeal Breakup Ruling

Software giant Microsoft Corp. on Tuesday filed formal notice to appeal a federal judge's order that it be split in two for violating antitrust law, voicing confidence that the appeals court would rule in its favor.

Microsoft also said it had asked the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., to stay a raft of business restrictions ordered by Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson as part of his ruling last week that ordered the breakup.

Later, the U.S. Department of Justice said it asked the Judge to send the case directly to the Supreme Court, bypassing the lower appeals court that has ruled in Microsoft's favor in the past.

Microsoft has said it opposes going to the Supreme Court and prefers the normal appeals route.

"Microsoft is looking forward to the next phase of this case, and we are optimistic that the appellate courts will reverse the recent ruling," Microsoft Chief Executive Steve Ballmer said in a statement.

"We believe this judgement is both wrong and unfair. We believe the appellate courts will recognize that Microsoft's product innovation is the heart and soul of competition in the high-tech industry," Ballmer said.

Although Jackson said in his final judgement last week that a breakup should be delayed until the end of the appeals process, he ordered the conduct remedies to take effect 90 days after his ruling.

Those conduct restrictions include forcing Microsoft to reveal more of the source code of its Windows operating system, allow computer makers to customize the look of Windows on their machines, and set pricing guidelines

for Windows.

Laying out its arguments in a 39-page document, Microsoft branded the measures as "draconian" and said they went far beyond the scope of the case, which dealt with the company's battle over Internet browser software.

"The effect of these provisions will be devastating, not only to Microsoft, but also to its employees, shareholders, business partners and customers, and could have a significant adverse impact on the nation's economy," Microsoft said.

Shares in Microsoft rose more than 3, to 70-1/8 in after-hours trading following the announcements. In regular trading, Microsoft rose 1 to 67-7/8.

Microsoft's filings came swiftly after Jackson on Tuesday sided with the U.S. Justice Department and agreed to delay a decision on the company's request for him to stay the restrictions, saying the company needed to first give formal notice of appeal.

Justice, which says the company is trying to drag out the case, had hoped that linking the two would force Microsoft's hand.

The appeals court said it had agreed to hear Microsoft's case.

In an unusual development, the court, citing the "exceptional importance" of the case, agreed to hear it "en banc," meaning the full court would participate rather than the usual three-judge panel.

"This clearly shows that the court of appeals is ready to move ahead with this case and they certainly have the resources and interest to move ahead in the most expeditious manner," Microsoft spokesman Jim Cullinan said.

"All Microsoft is looking for is to move ahead," Cullinan said.

Microsoft to Object to Supreme Court Motion Monday

Software titan Microsoft Corp. said on Wednesday it would formally file early next week its objections to the U.S. government's attempt to take its appeal of the antitrust breakup order against it directly to the Supreme Court.

Microsoft, which on Tuesday filed official notice to appeal a federal judge's ruling to break the company in two, said it was entitled to 11 calendar days to respond to the Justice Department's motion that the case detour a lower appeals court and go directly to the nation's top judges.

But in a sign that the world's biggest software company wants the issue of where the appeal will be heard settled swiftly, Microsoft said it would file its response on Monday, in line with a schedule proposed by Justice.

The government made a filing of its own Wednesday, objecting to Microsoft's application Tuesday to the U.S. Court of Appeals for a stay of the entire breakup order when the company already had a similar request before trial judge Thomas Penfield Jackson.

The U.S. Justice Department and the states suing Microsoft asked the

appeals court to either summarily dismiss the firm's stay application as premature or defer its stay opinion until Jackson rules and the issue of which court will hear the appeal is resolved.

Microsoft said its filing would outline the company's objections to taking the appeal directly to the Supreme Court, bypassing the lower court of appeals in Washington, D.C., which has sided with Microsoft in the past.

"The government's petition is certainly questionable about the rationale for expediting this case directly to the Supreme Court," company spokesman Jim Cullinan said in an e-mail.

"Microsoft does not believe that the government should try to evade the Court of Appeals," Cullinan said. "Given the vast array of factual, legal and procedural errors ... we believe the Court of Appeals is the proper venue."

Shortly after Microsoft filed its notice to appeal, Justice said it had asked Judge Jackson, who found Microsoft guilty of breaking antitrust law and ordered it split up, to fast-track the appeal to the Supreme Court, saying the significance of the case warranted special treatment.

In an unusual step, the appeals court, citing the "exceptional importance" of the case, said all seven of its eligible judges would hear the case rather than the usual three-judge panel followed by a full hearing.

Microsoft said that showed the appeals court would move quickly to hear the case.

Even if Jackson sends the case to the Supreme Court, the judges are not obliged to accept it, and many observers have said the court may prefer to see the case work its way through the legal system before hearing it.

U.S. House Approves Electronic Signature Measure

A bill that gives electronic signatures and documents the same force in law as their paper counterparts won near unanimous approval in the U.S. House of Representatives on Wednesday.

Under the proposed law, consumers and businesses will be able to sign checks, complete loan applications and contract services all online in a further broadening of e-commerce.

"Today a consumer can apply for a mortgage or get a quote on life insurance policy (online) but when it comes time to close the deal, a consumer must physically sign the contract," said Rep. Thomas Bliley, a Virginia Republican.

"E-sign will allow the entire transaction to be done electronically and the transaction will have the same legal effect and enforceability as a paper contract," he said during floor debate.

The House voted 426-4 in favor of the measure which now goes to the Senate for consideration. President Clinton has said he will sign the bill.

Consumers will still have the choice to use electronic signatures, so long

as they can reasonably demonstrate their ability to access the documents, or they can stay with the more traditional handwritten signature for signing legal documents.

"No consumer would be forced into using electronic signature if they would feel more comfortable using a handwritten or normal signature," said Rep. Peter Sessions, a Texas Republican.

The bill would still require the cancellation of critical services like power, water and gas to still come on paper to carry their full force.

That would also include court orders, eviction notices, cancellation of health or life insurance, product recalls and paperwork to accompany shipments of hazardous materials.

However, the average consumer won't likely be able to immediately go on the Internet and complete entire transactions as the software and other necessary technologies are not widely available yet, according to industry experts.

"Operational implementation will take a while," said Mario Houthooft, president and chief executive officer of VASCO Data Security International Inc., a firm that offers authentication solutions.

"The first people that will use it will be the businesses, primarily the financial industry," he said.

VASCO, serving more than 130 financial institutions in over 45 countries, sells so-called Digipass authentication devices to about four million users that can provide authentication as well as digital signatures.

Financial institutions will be able to seek certain exemptions from federal regulators from some of the consumer consent requirements under limited circumstances.

One consumer watchdog urged consumers to be wary when signing documents electronically.

"You should always be careful and cautious before you sign your name on the digital line," Frank Torres, legislative counsel for Consumers Union, said in a statement.

Once final approval is reached and Clinton signs the measure, the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act would take effect Oct. 1, apart from the electronic record-keeping provisions.

House Committee OKs Anti-spam Bill

Federal anti-spam legislation passed a key test today, as the House Commerce Committee voted to approve a bill limiting junk email.

The Unsolicited Electronic Email Act would place restrictions on email marketers. Those limits include requiring spam to include a valid reply address and forcing people and companies to stop spamming upon request.

"This legislation weeds out fraudulent spam and eliminates the burden" of deleting unwanted email, Rep. Gene Green, D-Texas, said in a statement.

Green co-wrote the bill with Rep. Heather Wilson, R-N.M.

Despite numerous attempts, Congress has so far failed to enact anti-spam legislation. While many states have passed laws limiting unsolicited bulk email, early legal tests have gone against them. Courts have so far struck down two anti-spam laws, citing constitutional limits on the states' ability to regulate interstate commerce.

Spam watchers said the bill stands a good chance of success as it moves toward a full vote in the House and a reconciliation with a companion bill in the Senate. The committee approved the bill by a unanimous voice vote today.

Ray Everett-Church, chief privacy officer at AllAdvantage.com, an Internet company that pays consumers to surf the Web, said the bill has a broad coalition of backers and has bipartisan backing in both the House and the Senate.

"This legislation has a lot of support from industry, from Internet service providers and from consumer groups," he said, adding that some marketing companies oppose it.

The Direct Marketing Association did not immediately return phone calls seeking comment.

Microsoft Launches New Windows for Smaller Devices

Microsoft Corp. on Thursday rolled out a new version of its operating system for handheld computers and other devices, offering more features and lower prices in an escalating assault on rival Palm Inc.

Windows CE 3.0, the third incarnation of the platform, boasts new consumer-oriented features such as new software for surfing the Internet, running graphics, and listening to digital music, Microsoft said.

Microsoft is also wooing developers with a new suite of tools to write programs for Windows CE and by revealing parts of the source code -- an unusual move by the software giant, which is fighting a federal judge's order to open more of the code to its Windows software for personal computers.

"Our hope for where Windows CE will go is what is now most visible -- handhelds and Internet appliances, and also retail point-of-sales and industrial automation, said Deanne Hoppe, product manager for Microsoft's embedded and appliance platforms group.

"We're hoping it will continue to be adopted more broadly, Hoppe said in an interview.

Microsoft has been trying to catch up to Santa Clara, Calif.-based Palm, maker of the Palm Pilot line of personal digital assistants that claim about 70 percent of the market.

The new version of Windows CE is already powering Microsoft's Pocket PCs -- handheld devices made by computing giants like Compaq Computer Corp. and Hewlett-Packard Co. to challenge Palm's dominance.

The new Windows CE will also be more ``componentized -- jargon for making programs more flexible by breaking their functions down into distinct parts that developers can mix and match.

That will make it easier to stuff the software into devices like mobile telephones, interactive cable television set-top boxes, car dashboards and even unlikely places such as gasoline pumps and kitchen appliances.

Previous versions of CE were widely criticized for taking up too much space to work well with or fit inside smaller devices that have severe limits on memory and processing power.

Opening up parts of the source code will also help developers adapt the software to a range of devices that have vastly different hardware innards -- a fact that slowed earlier rollouts of CE, Hoppe said.

``That was something that a lot of customers and developers asked us to do. By giving them this, we believe it will help get more devices to market in quicker time, Hoppe said.

Palm's operating system is open source, meaning anyone can pick it apart and write programs for it. One of the biggest selling points for the company's devices is that thousands of third-party applications, from scientific calculators to diet planners, can be found online for little or no charge.

Microsoft is also hoping to compete on price, saying it will license CE at discounts of up to 50 percent depending on the length and volume of a contract.

``Given that CE has been less than enthusiastically accepted, those are the kind of things you'd expect -- price discounts to get market share and opening the source code, said David Smith, an analyst with Gartner Group, a consulting firm.

Programmers Prepare New, Free MP3 Format

Worried about steadily rising royalty fees for online MP3 music companies, a group of open-source developers has created a new music format they say will be free and will equal or better MP3's quality.

Dubbed "Vorbis," the open-source project is being led by programmers at CMGI's iCast. It is scheduled be unveiled in beta form at next week's MP3.com summit in San Diego. It will be released to the Web without intellectual property restrictions, which means software companies, Internet radio firms and music sellers can use the format without paying patent holders a dime.

That's different from MP3 itself, the most popular type of downloadable music files on the Web. In the technology's early days, no royalty payments were collected. But the German research institute that helped created the format is beginning to collect its dues, charging companies that create MP3 software and hardware or sell MP3 downloads. Next year it will begin charging Webcasters, it says.

"People think MP3 is free, but it's not," said Jack Moffitt, the 22-year-old iCast vice president who is overseeing the open-format effort.

CMGI and iCast won't see any revenues directly from the sale and use of the format. But the open-source effort is likely to pay for itself if iCast can switch its Web radio service into the Vorbis format and avoid paying MP3 royalty fees, Moffitt says.

Vorbis will hit a market where older music formats have already established themselves, possibly making it difficult for even a free version to gain traction. MP3 is the dominant format for Web surfers seeking free downloads. But Microsoft's Windows Media format is beginning to gain acceptance by record companies and other firms seeking a more secure format. Liquid Audio's format is used for some secure music downloads, and RealNetworks' technology is used for much of the streaming audio on the Web.

The Vorbis project dates back several years to when lead programmer Christopher Montgomery was still in graduate school.

Montgomery and several other open-source music developers have recently been hired by iCast, which has agreed to fund the project.

"We're hiring as many of the superstars of the community as possible," Moffitt said.

Moffitt, who is overseeing the project, is himself the creator of the open-source Icecast, a streaming MP3 technology similar to Nullsoft's Shoutcast, now owned by America Online. He came to iCast last year when the company acquired Net radio firm Green Witch.

iCast and other Webcasting companies are facing potentially steep hikes in their operating costs next year, a looming fact that has helped drive the Vorbis effort.

Much of the technology underlying the MP3 music format is patented by the Fraunhofer institute in Germany, a sprawling research organization that counts audio technology as just one of dozens of disparate interests. The institute has licensed its rights to Thomson Multimedia, which is in charge of collecting the patent royalties.

And those royalties can add up. MP3 download companies are required to pay 1 percent of the price charged to the listener per song, with a \$15,000 minimum. MP3 hardware companies must pay 50 cents per unit shipped, also with a \$15,000 annual minimum.

The biggest effect has likely been on software companies trying to make free MP3 encoders--a difficult task given that the company must pay Thomson \$5 per unit. That means companies such as MusicMatch that distribute free MP3-based CD "rippers," which allow people to convert CDs and translate them into digital file formats, are actually suffering considerable financial drain with every download.

Some free rippers have developed in the open-source community, such as the LAME (which originally stood for Lame Ain't an MP3 Encoder) program. This is distributed as code that must be "compiled" into a working software program, allowing it to exist in a legal gray area.

Thomson plans to start charging Webcasters on behalf of Fraunhofer beginning next year. But it hasn't yet figured out how much or how it will levy the fees, according to Henri Linde, vice president of new business.

Thomson's MP3 licensing Web site indicates the model is likely to be similar to those for the other businesses.

"We do not charge royalties for MP3 streaming or MP3 broadcasting (e.g., Internet Radio) until the end of the year 2000," the site says. "Beyond this date we anticipate to charge a small annual minimum and a percentage of revenue."

The Vorbis project will need to win the support both of online music companies and consumers--many of whom have already built extensive MP3 libraries--if it is to make a dent in the marketplace.

But that work is already under way, the programmers say. Plug-ins have been written for many of the most popular MP3 players, such as Winamp, Freeamp and Sonique. The companies hope to see the plug-ins find their way into the most basic download of these players, helping the format

A representative for Lycos, which owns Sonique, said the company had seen the Vorbis plug-in and called it "really well done."

iCast will certainly be among the first to adopt the technology, as it is being developed in-house. But other online radio music-streaming companies said they also were open to the idea.

"We're always looking for a low-cost alternative," said Keith Crosley, marketing director for WiredPlanet.com, which streams MP3 songs. "I think everyone in the online music space will be following the open-source efforts very closely."

Can Microsoft's WebTV Handle the New Competition?

America Online's AOLTV may not have blockbuster sales out of the gate, but analysts say it will provide an immediate shake-up to the interactive TV market.

Although not clearly superior to existing interactive TV offerings, analysts say AOLTV is poised to have a significant effect on the market because of its track record with its online service for PC users and its relationship with cable provider Time Warner, as well as because no existing service has a lock on the market.

"Right now, the market is pretty wide open," said Ken Smiley, an analyst with Giga Information Group. "I think there's plenty of room for a lot of devices from a lot of manufacturers, providing a lot of different services."

But the online service company is not assured of instant or widespread success in the market, which has thus far been marked by a complex network of relationships, delayed product launches, and products that customers and analysts say have failed to live up to the hype.

Many companies are targeting the television as one of the future access points for home Internet use, along with wireless handheld devices, Web tablets and other Net appliances. This market is expected to grow from 11 million units shipped in 1999 to 89 million units in 2004. The market will grow from revenues of \$2.4 billion last year to \$17.8 billion in 2004.

Like Microsoft's WebTV, AOLTV will come in the form of a set-top box manufactured by Philips Electronics and will be available at retail stores such as Circuit City. It will be capable of offering dial-up Internet access, online content, some enhanced TV features such as e-commerce, and some digital video recording through its partnership with TiVo.

"They seem to be rolling out a product similar to what WebTV was doing a couple of years ago," said Jim Penhune, an analyst with The Yankee Group. "A standalone box with a dial-up modem built by Philips."

Eventually, both WebTV and AOLTV are expected to offer broadband, or high-speed, Internet access, in addition to more sophisticated e-commerce and interactive content features. They will face competition from upcoming and existing game consoles and from digital cable set-top boxes.

"All this discussion of AOLTV is starting to reinvigorate the category," said Rob Schoeben, director of marketing for WebTV, who added that he has not yet seen AOL's service. "There is more interest in interactive television, and as the leading product we benefit from that."

WebTV is widely seen as the market leader, but analysts say the service has made numerous missteps in the past few years and has failed to turn hype into notable subscriber growth. Its customers have complained for years about slow upgrades to support standard Web technologies such as Java and RealNetworks' newer media players. Microsoft's service also has dealt with an aborted attempt to include banner advertisements on email pages.

WebTV has about 1 million customers, more than any other interactive TV service, but it is clearly not living up to the hype of its initial launch--or its 1997 acquisition by Microsoft, Giga's Smiley said.

"WebTV has the largest market share at this point, but not so large it couldn't be overtaken by someone else," he said. "Even if WebTV has dominance in the type of set-top box they have today, there's no indication that they're going to dominate the market."

The Microsoft-owned service has made several attempts to reposition itself as a provider of "enhanced television" rather than as a low-cost Internet service provider, most recently with the launch of Ultimate TV, a high-end digital video recorder and satellite TV receiver offered in partnership with DirecTV, also an AOL ally.

Initially marketed as a low-end way to access limited Web content, WebTV's early strategy was blown out of the water by dramatic price drops in computers and the resulting increase in PC purchases, Yankee's Penhune said.

"Microsoft bought WebTV when the idea of a standalone terminal seemed to be interesting," Penhune said. "But that TV-based Internet appliance model has failed to materialize because PC prices fell to comparable levels, and it wasn't clear that being able to offer Internet over TV was a compelling service."

The software maker hasn't placed all its bets with WebTV. It has deals with cable providers such as AT&T to put its Windows CE-based interactive TV software on upcoming digital cable set-top boxes. It also has agreements with satellite providers, including DirecTV and Echostar.

"Microsoft's whole position in this market is hard to interpret, because it

crosses over a lot of services and devices," said Penhune.

The battle is not simply a contest between Microsoft and AOL. Numerous companies are vying for solid footing in the interactive TV market. Chipmaker National Semiconductor, for example, has prototype designs of all-in-one DVD and digital video recorders in the works. And Sony has said it sees its upcoming PlayStation 2 as a digital hub for its home entertainment and content products.

All of the players will need to offer more than just broadband Internet access through television, which Microsoft and AOL will be able to do through their relationships with AT&T and Time Warner, respectively. As AOL has proven in the PC market, access must be married with compelling content to draw paying subscribers.

Sony, which has a movie studio and record label, will be in an enviable position to offer such a marriage, Giga's Smiley said, when it adds broadband Internet access to the PlayStation 2.

"Access alone isn't going to cut it--you need content, too," he said. "What more is Sony going to start offering down that pipe in the future? It won't just look like a game console."

Richard Doherty, president of the Envisioneering Group consultancy, also said Sony has eyes for the market but that the company has a ways to go.

"Sony has been painting amazing pictures of a rich interactive world, but that's going to take awhile to do," he said.

But according to WebTV's Schoeben, software, not content, will make the difference in attracting people. He notes that AOLTV uses proprietary technology, which means content developers and broadcasters must develop specific versions of their services for AOLTV.

Other game console makers, including Microsoft, Sega and Nintendo, have said they will offer online access through TV game consoles, which will also compete with AOLTV, according to Doherty. He agrees that AOL will have the edge because of existing relationships with broadcasters and content providers.

"Microsoft is very good with distribution, but they don't have a fraction of the content that AOL has," he said.

Wozniak Named to Inventors Hall of Fame

Steve Wozniak, who founded Apple in 1976 with Steve Jobs, has been named to the Inventors Hall of Fame for his contributions to a broad range of technologies, a selection committee announced Thursday. According to an AP story, the Apple II "brought together all the elements of the modern personal computer."

After founding Apple, Wozniak, often known simply as Woz, served as vice-president of research and development from 1976-1985. In 1985, he was awarded the National Medal of Technology. At the Tech Museum in San Jose, Woz recently celebrated the release of his updated biography written by Martha Kendall. It's entitled "Steve Wozniak, Inventor of the Apple Computer." You can learn more about the book -- and the man himself

at <http://www.woz.org/>.

Others named to the Inventors Hall of Fame were Walt Disney, who patented, in 1940, a special camera for filming animation; Alfred and Helen Free, who produced an easy self-test for use by diabetics in the late 1950s; Reginald Fessenden for his 1902 inventions related to wireless radio; William Kroll, who developed a method for manufacturing titanium and zirconium in 1940; and J. Franklin Hyde for his 1942 invention of an ultra-pure, high-quality glass used in fiber optics and spacecraft windows. Helen Free and Wozniak are the only two living honorees, according to the AP story.

The hall of fame was created in 1973 by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the National Council of Intellectual Property Attorneys.

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